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PARIS FOR UNESCO; ROME FOR FODAG; VIENNA FORIAEA AND UNIDO;

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TAGS: EAID, UNDP, AF

SUBJ: CERP 0008-ANNUAL EVALUATION OF UN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

REF: STATE 64907

1. SUMMARY: THERE HAS BEEN GENERAL TIGHTENING AND UPGRADING
OF UN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN AFGHANISTAN DURING PAST YEAR. UNDP
RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE HAS ASSEMBLED INCREASINGLY EFFECTIVE
STAFF WHO WORK IN CLOSE COORDINATION WITH OTHE DONORS AND HOST
GOVERNMENT IN DEVELOPING UNIFIED APPROACH TO ECONOMIC AND
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN AFGHANISTAN. UNDP ANDHBRD REPRES-
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TATIVES HAVE BEEN CANDIDIN THEIR ANALYSIS OF SUCCESSES AND

FAILURES IN THEIR PROGRAMS AND ARE ESPECIALLY SENSITIVE TO ELIMINATING THOSE PROGRAMS WHERE HOST GOVERNMENT HAS SHOWN MINIMAL INTEREST. DESPITE GOOD ADMINISTRATION, THE UNDP BASIC APPROACH OF SCATTERING EFFORTS AMONG MANY SMALL PROJECTS INHERENTLY LIMITS THE DEVELOPMENT IMPACT. END SUMMARY.

2. (A) ROLE OF UNDP IN UN DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM:

DURING CY 1974 UNDP RESREP HAS MATERIALLY IMPROVED COORDINATION OF ALL UN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN AFGHANISTAN. THERE IS DAILY, INFORMAL CONTACT WITH ALL ELEMENTS OF UN PROGRAM. ALTHOUGH COORDINATION IS IMPROVED, THE RESREP STILL IS PLAGUED BY INDEPENDENT ACTIONS SUCH AS WORLD FOOD PROGRAM (WFP) PROCEEDING WITH WHEAT IMPORT PROGRAM OVER OBJECTIONS OF RESREP AND OTHER DONORS IN YEARS OF SELF SUFFICIENCY

AND POSSIBLE SURPLUS. UNDP RESREP'S RELATIONSHIP WITH HOST GOVERNMENT IS CONSIDERED GOOD TO EXCELLENT ESPECIALLY WITH GOA MINISTRY OF PLANNING OFFICIALS. EMBASSY/USAID MISSION BELIEVE LOCAL RELATIONS BETWEEN UNDP RESREP AND IBRD RESGPP HAVE IMPROVED CONSIDERABLY DURING PAST YEAR VIA CONTINUING, FREQUENT, INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS.

(B) COORDINATION OF ALL EXTERNAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

UNDP DOES NOT RPT NOT ACT AS OVER ALL COORDINATOR FOR MULTI-LATERAL AND BILATERAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN AFGHANISTAN. NONETHELESS, THERE ARE VERY CLOSE PROFESSIONAL AND SOCIAL CONTACTS BETWEEN UN STAFF AND USAID MISSION PERSONNEL IN AREAS OF MUTUAL CONCERN, ESPECIALLY IN GENERAL AREAS OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND AGRICULTURE (RURAL DEVELOPMENT).

(C) UNDP RESREP COORDINATING ROLE

THERE IS NO RPT NO OVERALL COORDINATING ROLE PERFORMED BY UNDP RESREP. AS MENTIONED IN PREVIOUS ANNUAL REPORTS, THERE IS IN LARGE PART DUE TO LACK OF SYMPATHY FOR SUCH A ROLE ON PART OF HOST GOVERNMENT. POLICY OR ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES PERMITTING UNDP RESREP TO PERFORM SUCH A COORDINATING ROLE WOULD MOST LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LIKELY HAVE TO EMANATE FROM HOST GOVERNMENT NOT RPT NOT FROM UN SYSTEM.

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(D) COUNTRY PROGRAM REVIEWS

ANNUAL UNDP COUNTRY PROGRAM REVIEW LAST HELD IN MARCH 1974 AND NEXT SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER, 1975 BECAUSE OF US BUDGET CYCLE. HOST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS LED BY MINISTER OF

PLANNING USUALLY ATTEND THESE REVIEWS. OTHER HOST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ATTEND FROM MINISTRIES INVOLVED IN UN PROJECTS. BILATERAL DONOR REPS WERE INVITED TO ATTEND REVIEW IN CY 1973 BUT NOT RPT NOT IN CY 1974.

(E) APPRAISAL OF PROPOSED PROJECTS FOR UN FUNDING.

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USAID MISSION HAS FOUND THAT BY TIME SUMMARIES OF UNDP PROJECT PROPOSALS ARE PREPARED, FORMALIZED AND RECEIVED BY USAID MISSION, TOO MANY COMMITMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE FOR MISSION TO INFLUENCE CONTENT OF PROJECT. MISSION CONSEQUENTLY TRIES TO RELY ON INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN AMBASSADOR, USAID DIRECTOR, AND OTHER USAID PERSONNEL WITH THEIR UNDP COUNTERPARTS TO ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE CONTENT AND DIRECTION OF UNDP AND OTHER UN PROJECTS WHILE THEY ARE STILL IN FORMATIVE STAGE. CLOSE LIAISON IS MAINTAINED TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION AND IDEAS, TO CRITIQUE AND ASSESS ON-GOING PROJECTS AND PROJECT IDEAS AND TO DISCUSS ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO DEVELOPMENTAL PROBLEMS. THIS APPROACH LARGELY ELIMINATES DUPLICATION, PROVIDES SOME MUTUAL SUPPORT AND MAKES IT POSSIBLE FOR THE USAID MISSION TO INFLUENCE THE UN PROGRAM TO SOME DEGREE. IT IS A STANDING PRACTICE FOR NEW UN OFFICIALS AND FOR VISITING UN CONSULTANTS AND SURVEY TEAMS TO VISIT THE USAID MISSION FOR INFORMAL BRIEFINGS, TO EXCHANGE IDEAS AND TO GATHER INFORMATION. MOST VISITING AID CONSULTANTS AND SURVEY TEAMS ALSO CALL ON UN OFFICIALS FOR A BRIEFING.

(F) PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION - ON NEGATIVE SIDE, UNDP BELIEVES

KUNAR INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT BEGUN IN 1971 WAS BADLY CONCEIVED AND BADLY CARRIED OUT AND LAYS BLAME ON UNDP STAFF. SIMILARLY, ICAO ASSISTANCE TO DOMESTIC BAKHTAR AIRLINES WAS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TERMINATED ON MARCH 31, 1975 DUE PRIMARILY TO LACK OF HOST GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR PROJECT. ACCORDING TO UNDP, HOST GOVERNMENT DID NOTHING BUT MAKE NECESSARY CHANGES TO MANAGEMENT AND FINANCIAL PROCEDURES OF AIRLINE WHICH WOULD HAVE ALLOWED ICAO TEAM TO CONTINUE ITS ASSISTANCE. ALSO ON NEGATIVE SIDE, EMBASSY/USAID MISSION HAVE MISGUIDED TENDENCY ON PART OF IBRD SURVEY TEAMS TO UNDER ESTIMATE COSTS OF SOME UN PROJECTS, SPECIFICALLY HERAT SLAUGHTERHOUSE AND KUNDUZ/KHANABAD IRRIGATION/HYDRO POWER PROJECTS. HOWEVER, SOME UNDER ESTIMATES WERE DUE TO LONG LEAD TIME IN IMPLEMENTING APPROVED PROJECTS WHICH WERE CAUGHT IN RECENT YEARS'S PRICE ESCALATIONS. NEWLY ASSIGNED IBRD RES REP IS MAKING EFFORTS OVERCOME THESE INITIAL DEFICIENCIES DURING RECENT WASHINGTON CONSULTATIONS.

ON POSITIVE SIDE, UN PROJECTS IN TELECOMMUNICATIONS,

WATER MANAGEMENT, SMALLPOX ERADICATION PROGRAM AND CARTOGRAPHY CAN BE LISTED AS SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS AS WELL AS UN-SPONSORED MANAGEMENT TEAM OPERATING IN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT BANK.

(G) PROJECT EVALUATION - UNDP CONDUCTS TRI-PARTITE

REVIEW OF ON-GOING PROJECTS EVERY SIX MONTHS. IN ADDITION THERE IS UN IN-HOUSE REVIEW OF PROJECTS EVERY 2-3 MONTHS WITH ATTENDANCE BY EXECUTING AGENCY, HOST GOVERNMENT MINISTRY OF PLANNING PERSONNEL AND UNDP STAFF. UNDP DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE ANNUAL REPORT FOR CY 1973 IS A PARTICULARLY THOROUGH AND WELL-PREPARED DOCUMENT WHICH EMBASSY/USAID MISSION HAVE USED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS IN ON-GOING DISCUSSIONS WITH HOST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.

(H) WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT - UNDP PROGRAMS IN FUNCTIONAL

LITERACY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AREAS HAVE SOME SPIN OFF INVOLVING WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS, BUT THUS FAR THERE ARE NO RPT NO UN PROGRAMS EXPECIALLY DESIGNED TO IMPACT ON WOMEN. THERE ARE CONSIDERABLE INFORMATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN CONNECTION WITH INTERNATIONAL WOMENS YEAR. IN SUMMARY, IF UNDP SEEMS TO BE ADDRESSING THE FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION BUT HAS NO RPT NO UNECIFIC, OPERATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN.

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(I) FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES- EMBASSY/USAID MISSION OVER-ALL

ASSESSMENT OF UN PROGRAMS IN AFGHANISTAN IS THAT THEY ARE REASONABLY WELL ADMINISTEEED, KEYED TO HOST COUNTRY NEEDS AND COST-EFFECTIVE. AS MENTIONED ABOVE THERE NEEDS TO BE MORE ATTENTION PAID TO COST ESTIMATES PREPARED BY UN-FINANCED PROJECT FEASIBILITY SURVEY TEAMS BASED ON PAST EXPERIENCES. ALSO BELIEVE UN APPROACH OF SCATTERING RESOURCES ACROSS MANY VERY SMALL PROJECTS OFTEN LIMITS DEVELOPMENTAL IMPACT. OUR EXPERIENCE WITH AMERICAN ASSISTANCE AND FROM OBSERVING UN PROJECTS IS THAT CERTAIN CRITICAL MASS NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH MUCH CHANGE AND LARGER PROJECTS SHOW DISPROPORTIONATELY MORE OUTPUTS. SINGLE ADVISOR SELDOM SPURS MUCH CHANGE. BELIEVE IT WORTHWHILE FOR UN TO CONSIDER FEWER, LARGER PROJECTS AS A STYLE OF DOING BUSINESS.

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